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ably good must come and as the years go by who shall say that America may not eventually repay her debt fourfold.

CONSERVATION

The keynote of the joint sessions of the American Civic Association and the National Municipal League held in Cincinnati in November, was "conservation," a word which, as Dr. Charles W. Eliot has remarked, has of late taken on new meaning and significance. The necessity for restricting the wasteful use of public commodities such as coal, timber, phosphate, water, lest the supply become exhausted, seems logical in the extreme and scarcely open to argument; by the people of the country such a policy is understood and endorsed. These are the things which go to make life not merely tolerable but possible. On the other hand, however, the question of conserving the beauty of the country, which is to the welfare of the people no less vitally important if less essential, is met with an evident decrease of interest and enthusiasm. Niagara has been partially saved through the energetic watchfulness of a few; that the wonders of the Yellowstone have not been destroyed by sheer wantonness is thanks to the military guard which the government has placed over them. Because of its beauty alone, apart from scientific interest, no single spot in the United States has been set aside as a heritage for succeeding generations. And yet it is well understood that in nature is the source of art and that in the appreciation of beauty man attains the greatest heights. But laying aside the ethical and esthetic consideration, beauty may be regarded as a financial asset. Drain Niagara Falls and what would become of the hotels, the railways, and the souvenir shops adjacent? What is it that draws thousands of tourists annually to Switzerland—its famous cheeses or its magnificent mountain peaks? Is the Rhine sown with American dollars because it flows through Germany and past cities of some renown? No country is more richly endowed in this respect than America and if her resources

of natural beauty are judiciously conserved it is safe to prophesy that at no far distant time the stream of travel will be turned westward across the Atlantic. But in this country wherever man has gone he has despoiled the face of nature. In the far west where through irrigation the desert has been made to blossom like the rose and millions of wanderers have found homes little thought has been given to the question of beauty, utility serving as a crutch in its lieu; in the east as the population of great cities has crept out into the country no pains have been taken to conserve nature's free gifts—the loveliness of foliage, of little streams, of open skies. There is, of course, a beauty of the city as well as a beauty of the country, a beauty of orderliness, of usefulness, of purpose, but without the one it is probable that in time we shall cease to have the other. Switzerland has found it worth while to post notices along its highways calling the attention of the travelers to certain superior views lest blindly he pass them; France finds it the part of thrift to keep her roads in repair; Italy guards her traditions in landscape as she does her treasures of art. Good surroundings help, it has been found, to make good citizens. Pride in one's town, one's State, and one's country lend stability to patriotism. Beauty as a national asset is then by no means to be lightly esteemed, nor its conservation to be relegated to "a more convenient season." To art it means life, to the nation wealth, to man uplift and refreshment.

THE AMERICAN CIVIC ASSOCIATION.

One of the factors in the upbuilding of appreciation for beauty in this country is undoubtedly the American Civic Association, which has energetically for some years pressed the propaganda of civic improvement as regards external aspect, reacting upon sanitary conditions and general environment. In its activities it seems almost ubiquitous—lending a hand wherever and whenever apparently there is a need. It has vigilantly

helped to guard Niagara, it has urged the preservation of the White Mountains and Southern Appalachian scenery, it has advanced the children's garden movement, vigorously protested against the billboard abuse, secured the enactment of laws for intelligent street planting of trees, urged the abatement of the smoke nuisance and kept a watchful eye in many quarters, making timely protest or giving needed advice as circumstances required and warranted. Its business is to promote the general welfare and this it does by perpetually minding the business of others. And yet to an extent its work is done quietly, frankly, and without display. Several hundred village improvement associations are affiliated with it and to these it sends informing pamphlets, illustrated lectures, and, gratuitously, advice. To the American Federation of Arts, whose scope is wider, embracing not only civic art, but the art of the gallery, the museum, the workshop and home, it gives hearty and generous co-operation. It distributes literature and, through a clipping sheet, news to its members and to the press, and it finds in the Women's Clubs throughout the country warm support and helpful co-workers. While zealous it is well directed and efficient.

RICHARD WATSON GILDER.

It is seldom that the death of an individual brings as deep a sense of loss to numbers of people as did that of Richard Watson Gilder, who but so lately was called from among us. Few possess in equal measure the gift of brotherly love, the breadth of interest and sympathy, the single-heartedness and loftiness of purpose which while exalting humbled and endeared. Not many have lived so useful a life or left so rich a heritage. Best known perhaps as a poet and the editor of *The Century*, Mr. Gilder was in truth a friend of art. Associated in close comradeship with these who have done much to uplift, through their productions, the standard of American art, he was continually in touch with and keenly alive to what progress was being made

and ever ready to aid the forward movement. In the betterment of public art typifying the uplift of public ideals, he was ever interested and active. Never was he too busy to give ear to that which concerned the advancement of art in any of its phases, nor to lend his aid when it promised to be of avail. And withal there was always a complete selflessness. When asked but a few months ago to permit the use of his name to strengthen a certain cause he replied that he believed its value was over-estimated, that it had been lent so often that it was almost worn out. Loyal to his friends, his ideals, his art, gentle and considerate, he was still capable of hot indignation against a meanness, a lack of integrity or a deliberate wrong, discriminating in his judgment, honest not only with others but with himself, and for this reason doubly serviceable. The place he leaves vacant will not be filled, but with the sense of bereavement is mingled a consciousness of the deathless quality of such an influence, the beauty and nobility of such a life.

NOTES

THE AMERICAN CIVIC ASSOCIATION convention of the American Civic Association which was held simultaneously with the fifteenth annual convention of the National Municipal League, on November 15th, 16th, 17th, and 18th, in Cincinnati, was marked by a spirit of optimistic determination to better existing conditions. Many interesting papers were read and addresses made which indicated progress made and the trend of endeavor. The entire day of November 16th was given over to a conference on city planning, on November 17th certain nuisances and their abatement were considered, and on the 18th thought was directed to the relation of art to everyday life. The session on the afternoon of the 16th was presided over by Mr. W. W. Hannan, of Detroit, the president of the National Association of Real Estate Exchanges, who, in an introductory address, declared the organi-